



South Dakota State Archives Records Training: The Basics

Part 1: What is a record?

Welcome to the South Dakota State Archives' basic records training series, Part 1:
What is a record?

"[A]dministration without records
is like music without notes..."



Henry Metcalfe



Records are the basis of our work as government employees. They contain the information that helps us make decisions, create policies, provide services, and manage assets. They also help us document our activities to ensure that we are held accountable to the citizens of South Dakota. Records are, as Henry Metcalfe would say, the notes with which we write the music that is government administration.

Record:

"a document, book, paper, photograph, sound recording, or other material, regardless of physical form or characteristics, made or received pursuant to law or ordinance or in connection with the transaction of official business."

SDCL 1-27-9



South Dakota Codified Law 1-27-9 has a more formal definition of a record:
A record is "a document, book, paper, photograph, sound recording, or other material, regardless of physical form or characteristics, made or received pursuant to law or ordinance or in connection with the transaction of official business."

Record:

**This includes
digital files and
information!**

"a document, book, paper, photograph, sound recording, or other material, **regardless of physical form or characteristics**, made or received pursuant to law or ordinance or in connection with the transaction of official business."

SDCL 1-27-9



Notice that a record can be in any format – which includes digital files and information! The digital files you create, even if they only exist in electronic form, are still records and should be treated as such.

Common records include:

- Correspondence
- Annual/Monthly Reports
- Personnel Files
- Financial Reports and Statements
- Budgets
- Contracts and Agreements
- Memos
- Newsletters
- Publications (Master Copy)
- Press Releases
- Marketing/Advertising
- Schedules/Calendars
- Email, Voicemail, and Text Messages
- Databases
- Audio-Visual Materials
- Meeting Agenda and Minutes
- Investigations
- Subject Files
- Strategic Planning Documents
- Training Materials
- Special Project Files
- Audits
- Social Media Posts
- Administrative Files
- Property Management Files
- Maps, Blueprints, and Construction Drawings

...and many more!

Common record series include correspondence, reports, contracts, newsletters, press releases, photographs, case or project files, social media posts, maps, email, and more. What types of records do you create in your daily work?

Does NOT include:

"Library and museum material made or acquired and preserved solely for reference or exhibition purposes, extra copies of documents preserved only for convenience of reference, and stocks of publications and of processed documents..."

- SDCL 1-27-9



Please note, the definition of a record specifically excludes library and museum material used for reference or exhibits, extra reference copies of documents, and stocks of publications and processed documents. These are nonrecord materials.

Does NOT include:

- Published reference materials
- Uncirculated drafts without comments
- Convenience or reference copies
- Junk mail
- Information that does not affect or reflect the transaction of State business



Other nonrecord materials include uncirculated drafts without substantive comments, junk mail, and other information that neither affects nor reflects the transaction of State business.

When in doubt – treat
it like a record!



If you are uncertain about whether something is a record or a nonrecord, treat it like a record.

Still have questions? Contact:



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Music - "Corporate Motivation" by AShamaluevMusic



Thank you for joining us for part one of our series. If you have questions, please contact Sara Casper at the State Archives, or Dana Hoffer with the State Records Management Office.